CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The present study focuses on the issue of foreground and background with reference to storyline, within the conceptual structures of storyline in Iu-Mienh[1] narrative discourse. A semantic approach to narrative discourse, especially in storyline and salience scheme analysis, is pursued in this research.

In explaining the salience scheme of verbs and clauses in relation to the mainline, or storyline, of Thai narrative, Somsonge (1991a:113) affirms the validity of a psychological perspective in ranking them with the following example:

> Reality is perceived through our cognitive experience or our approach to the world. For example, when we look into the field with nothing in it, the field itself is salient. However, if there is a herd of cows eating grass in the field, the cows are in focus and the field becomes a background. Suppose that a parachute is falling from a plane into the field. Now the parachute is salient and the cows are backgrounded. The field is further outranked.

This is probably an original insight applying Ronald W. Langacker's concept of Cognitive Grammar (e.g. 1987a, 1991b, 1991c, 2000) to Robert E. Longacre's theory of storyline (e.g. 1981, 1987, 1989a, 2003a) in discourse analysis.

1.1 Overview of the Thesis

Chapter 1 will set out research background, linguistic background, hypotheses, goal, methodology and scope of this study. Chapter 2 will survey relevant literature in the domain of discourse analysis and text linguistics in search of the approaches of various linguists to the semantics of discourse. Chapter 3 will describe some selected features of Iu-Mienh grammar limiting its scope to the minimum necessity for storyline analysis. Chapter 4 will present the textlinguistic storyline analysis of Iu-

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[1] The name of the people "Iu-Mienh" [ʔiu³¹ mjen³¹] is sometimes shortened to "Mienh" (in their orthography) or "Mien" (in Romanized transliteration) [mjen³¹]. In their own use, [mjen³¹] refers to both the people and their language, but if the latter needs to be distinguished from the former, "Mienh waac" [ʔmjen³¹ waː¹¹] is used to refer to 'Mien language.' Henceforth the Iu-Mienh orthography is used to cite words. See section for the orthography (1.3) and IPA equivelants in Appendix C.

Mienh and the salience scheme analysis. The chapter will also compare the definition of the storyline with its associated concept of foreground from two perspectives; that is, textlinguistics and Cognitive Linguistics. Setting the subject matter of the present study, narrative discourse, on the cognitive linguistics basis, chapter 5 will investigate some selected linguistic constructions that are used in relation to the storyline in Iu-Mienh to identify their conceptual structures. This final chapter has three main sections. The first section will discuss (i) that the storyline verbs are unmarked, (ii) that some grounding elements (in CG term) are used in the pivotal storyline and (iii) also discuss a gradient of materials in the salience scheme. The second will pick up the serial verb constructions (SVCs) and topic chains (topic-subject) to investigate their conceptual structure from a CG perspective. The last section will explain some selected constructions both from the storyline and cohesive materials to investigate their conceptual structure in terms of CG. Chapter 5 as a whole argues that transitivity and sequentialty of events in the narrative are the major factors that make the storyline perceptively foregrounded in Iu-Mienh. In contrast to chapter 4, which is descriptive, chapter 5 is explanatory.

1.2 Research Background

Sitting around a fire at night or in the shade under trees during the day, the Iu-Mienh people enjoy listening to story after story. The storytellers have learned the stories from their grandparents, parents or friends and are likely to pass them on to the next generations. Details of the stories may vary from region to region or from narrator to narrator but their main lines, or storylines, tend to remain the same. The storyline seems to be remembered well in the minds of storytellers and listeners. What is actually going on in the minds of a storyteller and their audience?

While tools for analyzing narrative discourse, including identifying storylines as a field linguistic method with the emphasis on surface structure, are now abundantly available, an investigation into the meaning of storyline reflected in the conceptual structure has not been pursued. What kind of discourse analysis can be useful to reveal such an aspect? Does an investigation of the meaning in a speaker's mind pose the danger that an investigator may become subjective, separated from the objective

surface structure of a discourse? After an empirical description of discourse features, could we not go on to the study of what they mean? This study is an investigation of such a bundle of questions against the background of the Iu-Mienh lovers of storytelling.

1.3 Research Questions

With this general background in mind, these inquiries are crystallized into three research questions.

Storyline is the mainline of narrative discourse (Longacre 1996:21). There is a difference between storyline and supportive materials, or non-storyline. In narrative discourse, the former is characterized by past tense (or preterite), the latter by aspect (e.g. imperfect, durative, descriptive) and modality (modal and irrealis). Hopper (1979) has proposed that the distinction is binary, referring to the former as "foreground" and the latter as "background." This view is endorsed by Niccacci (1986, English translation 1990) in accordance with the theory of *Vordergrund-Hintergrund* (foreground-background) by W. Schneider (1974) and H. Weinrich (1964),[2] who had developed it before American scholars began to use it. On the other hand, Longacre proposes a gradient of proximity to the storyline as exemplified in his metaphor of a "spectrum" (1981), which was later described as a "cluster concept" by Dry (1992:441). So the first research question is: (1) Is the relationship between storyline and supportive materials (i.e. non-storyline) binary (i.e. foreground vs. background) or a gradient?

Second, admitting that there is such a distinction between storyline and supportive materials, whether it is binary or a gradient, how do languages which do not have morphological inflection on verbs (e.g. past, perfect, imperfect) like Iu-Mienh identify the storyline? This question might be paraphrased to a wider one on the

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[2] Schneider's *Grammatik des biblischen Hebräisch* (Munich: Claudius, 1974) is an application of Weinrich's *Tempus. Besprochene und erzählte Welt* (Stuttgart, 1964), (which is translated, *Tense: The world of discourse and the world of narrative*) to Biblical Hebrew. Unfortunately, I do not have access to these works yet, hence they are not found in the bibliography of this thesis. A summary of the two authors is found in chapter 1 of Niccacci 1986. Talstra 1992 gives a detailed assessment of Schneider and Weinrich applying it to texts of 1 Kings 2 and Deutronomy 7.

assumption that the hypothesized answer to the first is that the relation between storyline and non-storyline is a gradient: (2) What linguistic expressions profile storyline (in Cognitive Linguistic terms)? On one hand, a simpler question in descriptive linguistic terms would be "What linguistic expressions carry a storyline in Iu-Mienh narrative discourse?" On the other hand, the question in Cognitive Linguistic terms, presupposes that a cline from the most dynamic material (viz. prototype) on the storyline to the most static supportive material (viz. extensions from prototype) can be better treated through a Cognitive Linguistic approach (e.g. Taylor 2003).

Thirdly, if the concept of the cline or gradient relationship between storyline and the supportive materials is valid, then the next question should be asked: (3) What are the conceptual structures of these linguistic expressions in the storyline? We assume that a sequentiality of events expressed mainly by cohesive clauses, retrospective and prospective conjunctions, and marginal clause particles on one hand and transitivity of events expressed mainly by unmarked verbs, aspectual auxiliaries, aspectual particles, adverbs, and the composite of serial verb constructions and topic chains on the other hand collaborate to indicate the storyline. In investigating the conceptual structures of storyline, these two areas have to be analyzed: sequentiality and transitivity of events. Following Langacker, who argues that meaning is equated with the conceptual structure (1991a:278), it is hoped that an attempt to answer these questions will identify the conceptual structure of storyline in Iu-Mienh narrative discourse.

1.4 Why Cognitive Linguistics?

With regard to the case for a use of Cognitive Linguistics (hereinafter CL) in this study, two basic reasons are employed: (1) because of the inseparability of form-and-meaning, and (2) because of continua across grammatical categories. Firstly, whilst the cautious attitude about subjectivity in the study of meaning has driven a generation of linguists to a formal study of language focusing on surface structure, semantics at the expense of form can safely be avoided as Langacker (1987a:46) asserts that "cognitive grammar claims that grammatical structure is almost entirely

overt." He goes on to say, "Surface grammatical form does not conceal a 'truer,' deeper level of grammatical organization; rather, it itself embodies the conventional means a language employs for the structuring and symbolization of semantic content" (Langacker 1987a:46-7). Our position, therefore, is to believe that CL is a useful tool for the investigation of meaning through surface grammatical form without divorcing one from the other.

Secondly, even from among non-strict followers of leading cognitive linguists (e.g. Langacker or Lakoff 1972, 1987), more and more linguists whose major concern is description are beginning to recognize the fuzziness and continua that run across linguistic categories, such as the continuum between verb and adjective (cf. Dixon 1977) or between verb and preposition (e.g. Yip and Rimmington 1997:114-9). With respect to the latter case, Clark (1989:190) refers a verb that resembles a preposition as a "locus verb," citing an example of 'to go' which is grammaticalized to a locus preposition 'to' in Khmer.

Further, one can observe a similar attitude among non-cognitive linguists. For example, Somsonge's metaphor of the descending parachute into a herd of cows grazing in a static field cited at the outset of this chapter can well be analogous to a continuum of a prototypical transitive verb (i.e. figure or trajector) on storyline, a midway participle, and a setting described in a prototypical stative verb of existence (i.e. ground or landmark) for her gestalt-like account of verb ranking (Somsonge 1991a:113). Dry (1992:441) also suggests a treatment of foreground as "the cluster of features which mark transitivity." This cluster concept enables characterizing the foreground in terms of prototypical transitivity and its gradual deviations (i.e. continuum) within the category. Furthermore, we should be reminded that the terminology Longacre used as early as 1981 was, to begin with, "spectrum", which is an optic term implying a gradual change through various linguistic expressions in relation to storyline. One of his *Two hypotheses* (1989b:414) contains a phrase "progressive degrees of departure from the main line" (i.e. a continuum, again). The last example is that the term "salience scheme" (Longacre 1996:27) suggests the treatment of constructions placed between the storyline and the farthest band can be

"schematic", which is a favorite term among cognitive linguists. All these notions in relation to the storyline as developed by Longacre have a good possibility of redefining them in terms of CL.

For these two reasons, we will attempt to analyze storyline from a CL perspective.

1.5 Hypotheses

Bearing these research questions in mind, this thesis will argue for the following two hypotheses (designated H1 and H2):

H1: *The relationship between storyline and non-storyline in Iu-Mienh is a gradient.*

H2: *The storyline in Iu-Mienh is characterized both semantically by transitivity and sequentiality of events and syntactically also by various linguistic constructions.*

Annotations on these two hypotheses may be needed. H1 is stimulated by an application of Longacre's storyline theory to Thai by Somsonge (1990b, 1991a, 1992b:419-33) as cited in 1.0. In contrast to Longacre and Somsonge, one representative from those who have a binary understanding would be Givón (1984):

> *Foreground vs. background*:
> "In connected discourse, some aspects of the description—coded in some sentences/clauses—are considered the *gist*, *backbone*, *main line* of the episode/description/communication. They are the **foreground** of the discourse. Others are considered *satellites*, *side-trips*, *supportive* portions of the description/episode/communication. Those are the **background** portions of the discourse". (Givón 1984:287-8) [Quotation marks, italics, and bold faces are as in the original.]

Concerning H2 related to the issues of languages without verbal inflection, Somsonge (1990b) writes:

> The study of bipartite [viz. binary] structure of discourse information in Thai reveals that in language without verbal inflection as Thai, the bipartite structure is not expressed solely by the verb system as in English but by a conspiracy of non-systemic ways which include types of verbs, adverbs, time phrases, sequential signals, temporal clauses/phrases/words, auxiliaries, pre-serial verbs, and post-serial verbs. (Somsonge 1990b:76) [Underline added]

In a very similar way, Iu-Mienh exhibits both the difficulty of dependency on the verbs in finding the storyline and the benefit of utilizing other contextual linguistic

expressions. These constructions are categorized in two groups: sequentiality and transitivity of events.

For Thai narrative, proposing four categories of storyline verbs (i.e. cognitive experience, events proper, motion verbs, and action verbs), Somsonge cautions about an exclusive dependency on them in identification of the storyline and suggests that "[t]he most important criterion" is sequentiality (1991a:106). Following her, the present H2 presupposes that the storyline in Iu-Mienh is composed of two major factors: sequentiality of events and transitivity of events or, in simpler terms, continuation and movement of events. Sequentiality is profiled by materials such as cohesive adverbial phrases/clauses, lexical cohesion through tail-head linkage, retrospective/prospective connectives, and marginal clause particles. Transitivity is encoded by unmarked verbs, global grounding elements (aspectual sentence level particles), local grounding elements, other verbs marked by auxiliaries/adverbs, aspectual verbs, and serial verb constructions and topic chains. Each group has clusters of materials/constructions. It is as if an intertwined cable of the two groups composed of clusters of the materials creates a storyline, and not that a particular verb form is responsible for that storyline.

In summary, it is hypothesized that the storyline is characterized as a gradient with reference to verb and clause ranking as opposed to the binary concept of foreground vs. background. As such, a prototype analysis of gradual order from types of Iu-Mienh verbs, aspectual constructions, aspectual particles, five kinds of copulatives to marginal cohesive materials is hypothesized to identify a conceptual structure of storyline.

1.6 Ethnic, Historical and Cultural Background

This study has adopted the name Hmong-Mien,[3] rather than formerly used "Miao-Yao"[4] language family. Hence, the name of the people for this thesis is Iu-Mienh, not

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[3] Ratliff (1992a: 17) says "'Hmong" is better than "Miao," as it does not have any of the derogatory associations connected with the Southeast Asian form of "Miao", "Meo."" In a similar way, Iu-Mienh want themselves to be referred to as "Mienh" / mien√ / 'human', not "Yao" which, in Thai, sounds like "to tease/jest" as in [jáojɔːk] (เย้าหยอก) or [krasáojáojè] (กระเซ้าเย้าแหย่). In fact "Iu-Mienh", which is a proper name of the people in

Yao. See Appendix A on confusion concerning the names of the Iu-Mienh people and a recent consensus about linguistic classification among linguists outside China. Iu-Mienh historical and cultural aspects are found in Appendix B.

1.7 Linguistic Background

Iu-Mienh belongs to the Hmong-Mien language family. As to the wider affiliation of the Hmong-Mien language family, the debate concerning whether it belongs to Sino-Tibetan (mostly by Chinese scholars) or Benedict's Austro-Thai stock (1975; 1976:1-36), or the Austro-Asian family assumed by Schliesinger (1998:130), or Haudricourt's (1966:56) denial of the Miao-Yao's contact with that family,[5] has not been settled yet. The place of "Miao-Yao" (viz. Hmong-Mien) under Austro-Thai posited by Benedict is presented in Figure 1.

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their language, is even better in order to avoid mispronunciation (by non-Iu-Mienh speakers) [mien˥] 'spirits/ghost.'

[4] The term "Hmong-Mien" is now more popular than "Miao-Yao," which seems to be obsolete at least among non-Chinese linguists. For example, Matisoff, at the special lecture held in Chulalongkorn University 10-26 January, 2005 in Bangkok, together with other Thai linguists who were present, never used "Miao-Yao" when talking about typology of South East Asian languages.

[5] Haudricourt does so on the basis of Hmong-Mien's late contact with Tai-Kadai languages, saying, "The Miao-Yao [Hmong-Mien] languages are not in contact with Austroasiatic languages, they are separated from them by the Tibeto-Burman languages, Thai and Kadai. The arrival of the Yao (Man) peoples in Vietnam dates only from the seventeenth century, and that of the Miao (Meo) from the nineteenth" (1966:56).
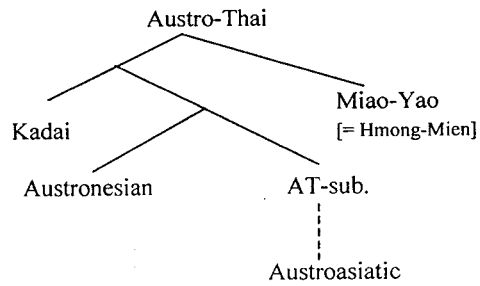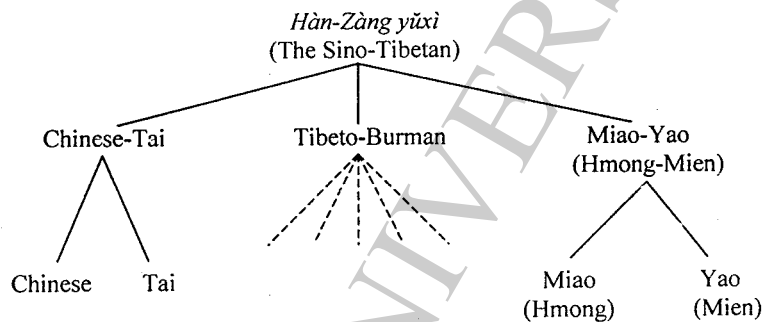
Figure 1. The place of the Hmong-Mien family posited by
Benedict (1976:29)

Chinese linguists and anthropologists in mainland China refer to Sino-Tibetan as the *Hàn-Zàng*[6] phylum in which Hmong-Mien has been considered to be included, as shown in Matisoff's summary of the Chinese version (1983:68) in Figure 2.

(Adapted from Matisoff 1983:68. Dotted lines indicate that the details of the group members are omitted for the sake of simplicity.)

Figure 2. A place of Hmong-Mien family posited by
Chinese scholars

Here in Thailand, while the Tribal Research Institute (Mongkol and Thaworn (eds.) 1995:3, 25) in Chiang Mai and The Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture in Thailand Association (IMPECT Association 2002) adopt Benedict's hypothesis (also Schliesinger 2003:272), others like Suriya (1988:4) of Mahidol University are more careful in their classification. Matisoff (1983:70-1) cautions against a rush

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[6] *Hàn-Zàng* (汉藏) is a compound of *hàn* (汉) 'the dominant ethnic group in China' and *zàng* in *Xīzàng* (西藏) 'Tibet,' hence, the Sino-Tibetan phylum is called *Hàn-Zàng yǔxì* (汉藏语系).

conclusion, and Clark (1989:175) summarizes, "Wider genetic relationships are undetermined."

Figure 3 shows Matisoff's presentation of the Hmong-Mien family (2001:299). What he calls "Chiengrai Yao" under "Iu Mien" in Figure 3 is the subject of the present study.
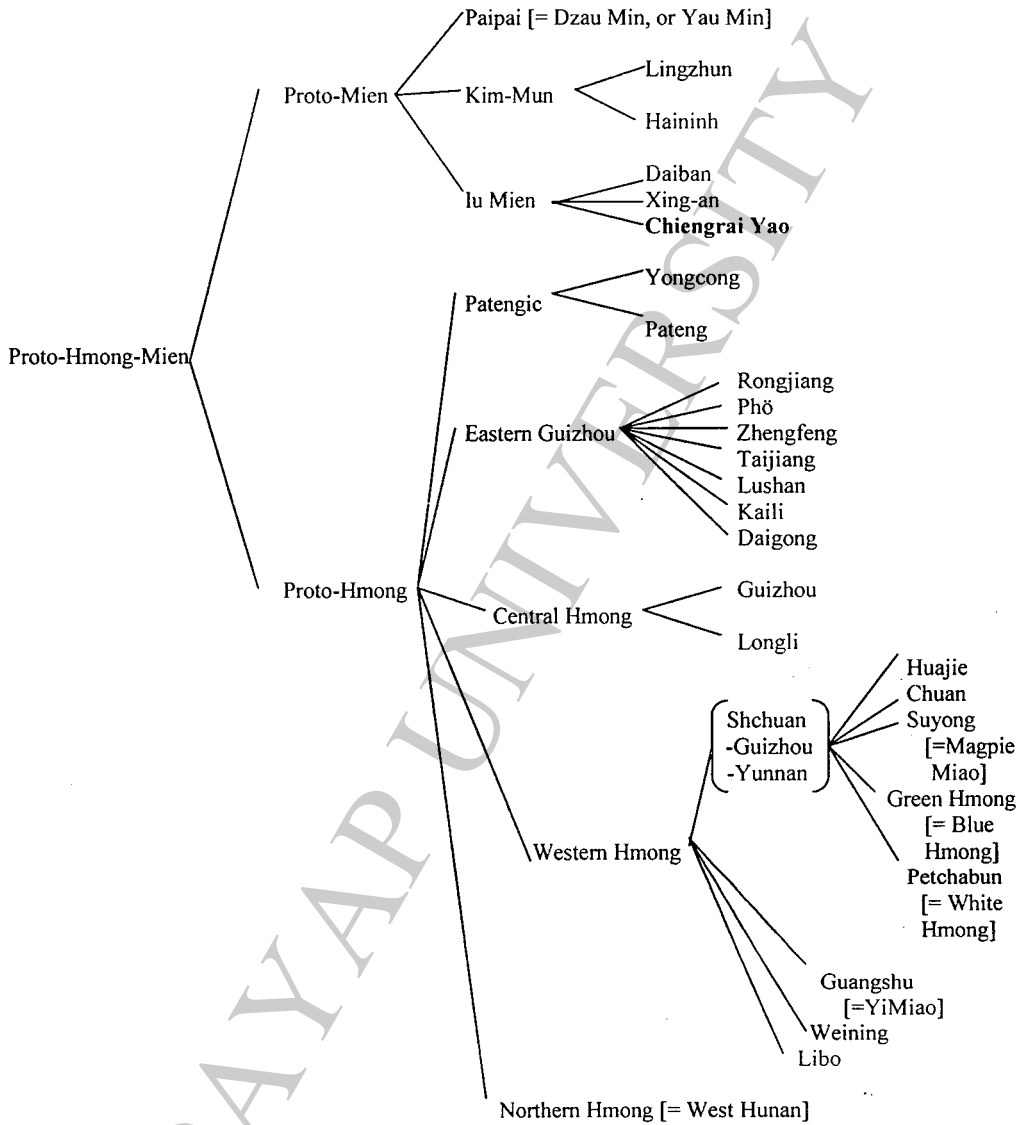
(Slightly altered from Matisoff 2001:299 without a content change)

Figure 3. The Hmong-Mien family

Subgroups of Mienic languages as suggested by Ratliff (1992a:19) are shown in Figure 4. The "Ho Nte" is an alternative name for Shē.
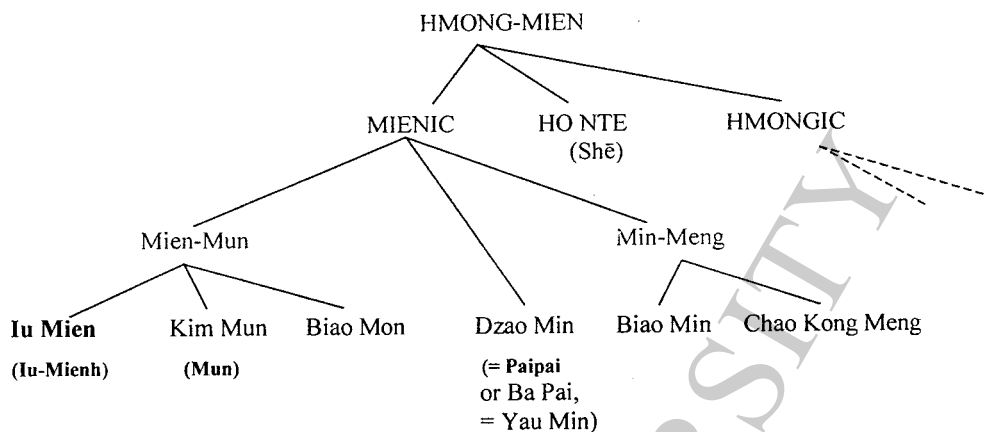

(Adapted from Ratliff 1992a:19)
Figure 4. The subgroups of Mienic languages

Matisoff's classification is based on place names and pays more attention to the Hmongic side of the tree. Ratliff presents more detailed members under the Mienic side (besides her main discussion on the Hmong tones). Matisoff's "Paipai" Yao or "Bá Pái Yáo" (八排瑶) (Zee 1991:71-86) corresponds with Ratliff's Dzao Min, also called Yau Min (邀敏) (Pan 1991:47). Other than four "dialects" studied by Mao (2004) (viz. Iu Mien (优勉), Kim Mun (金门), Biao Mon (标曼), and Dzau Min (藻敏)), Figure 4 also includes Biao Min (标敏) and Chao Kong Meng under the Min-Meng group.

The name of the people is 'Iu-Mienh' [ʔiu˩ mien˩] in their language, with a hyphen to indicate tone sandhi (a change from the original mid-level tone [ʔiu˧] to falling tone), and with the word-final *h* to indicate the falling tone. Though Iu-Mienh themselves distinguish the name of their ethnic group from the name of their language (*Mienh waac* [mien˩ wa:˩] 'Mienh language'), the term Iu-Mienh is used to refer to both in this study.

Iu-Mienh is spoken in Hunan, Guangtong, Guangxi, Guizhou, and Yunnan provinces of China (Figure 5), the northern provinces of Vietnam (Ha Giang, Cao Bang, Tuyen Quang, Lao Cai, Xiang Khoang, Luang Nam Tha, Bokeo, Yen Bai, Lai Chau, Lang
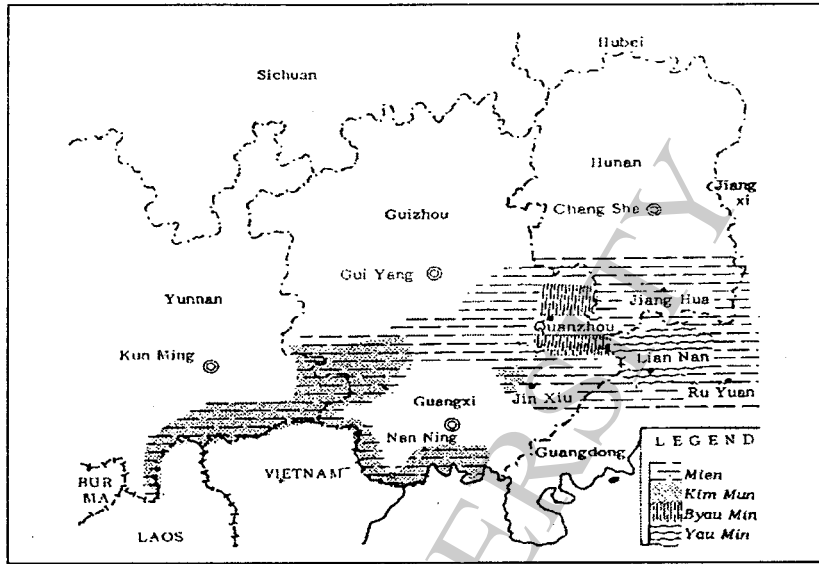
(Lemoine and Chiao 1991:46. Note that the Kim Mun are also on the island of Hainan though the map does not include it.)

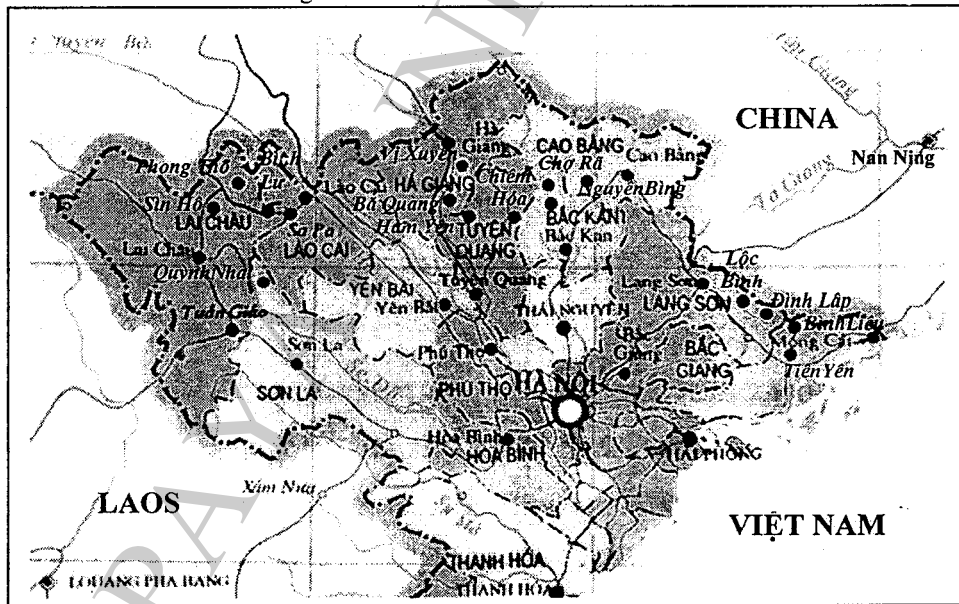Figure 5. Four Mienic "dialects" in China

Figure 6. Provinces and major districts of Iu-Mienh

settlement in the northern Vietnam

Son, Thai Nguyen, Son La, Hoa Binh, Phu Tho, Bac Giang, Thanh Hoa) (Figure 6) and Lao PDR (in the provinces of Hua Phan, Luang Prabang, Phongsali, Sayaburi, and Vientiane) (Figure 7), and the North Thailand provinces (Figure 8). The distribution of the speakers of Iu-Mienh in Vietnam and Lao PDR is shown in Figure 7. It should be remembered that in many of these areas cohabitation with the Kim Mun is common (cf. Figure 5).
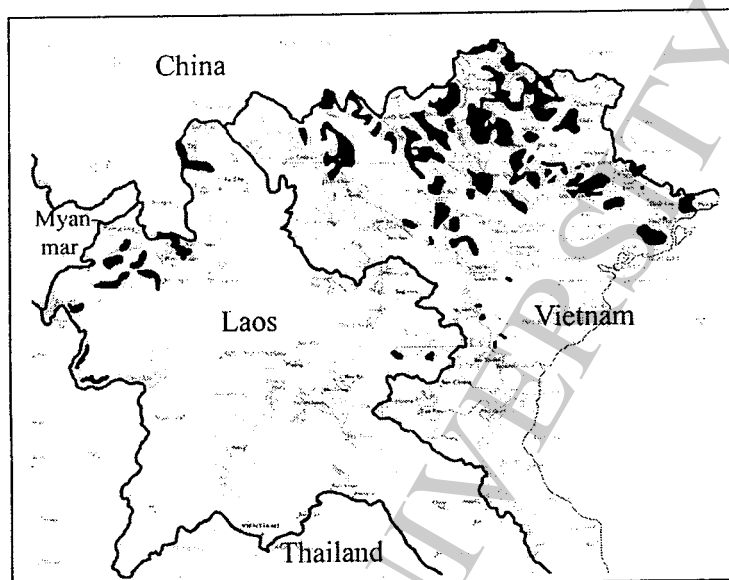

Figure 7. Areas of Iu-Mienh distribution in Vietnam and
Lao PDR

It is estimated that there are over 700,000 Iu-Mienh in China (Gordon 2005), 474,000 in Vietnam[7] (Dang, Son, and Hung 2000:183, following Schliesinger 1998:130), and 20,250 (Gordon 2005) in Lao PDR (Figure 11). In Thailand, the Tribal Research Institute[8] reported that 40,371 Iu-Mienh lived in eight provinces of Chiang Rai,

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[7] Khong (2002:172) lists 620,538 including Kim Mun but the sum of the detailed population by province is 448,047 (2002:52).

[8] This Institute has recently been dissolved and research work is now conducted under the direction of the Research Institute of Sociology, Chiang Mai University and the Tribal Museum in Chiang Mai. The Institute's first work on Iu-Mienh reports their migration to the city of Chiang Mai due to economic, social structure, and educational pressures, and cultural changes of their life, as argued by a Iu-Mienh researcher Mr. Yangyon and others (Prasit, Yangyon, Wisut 2004).

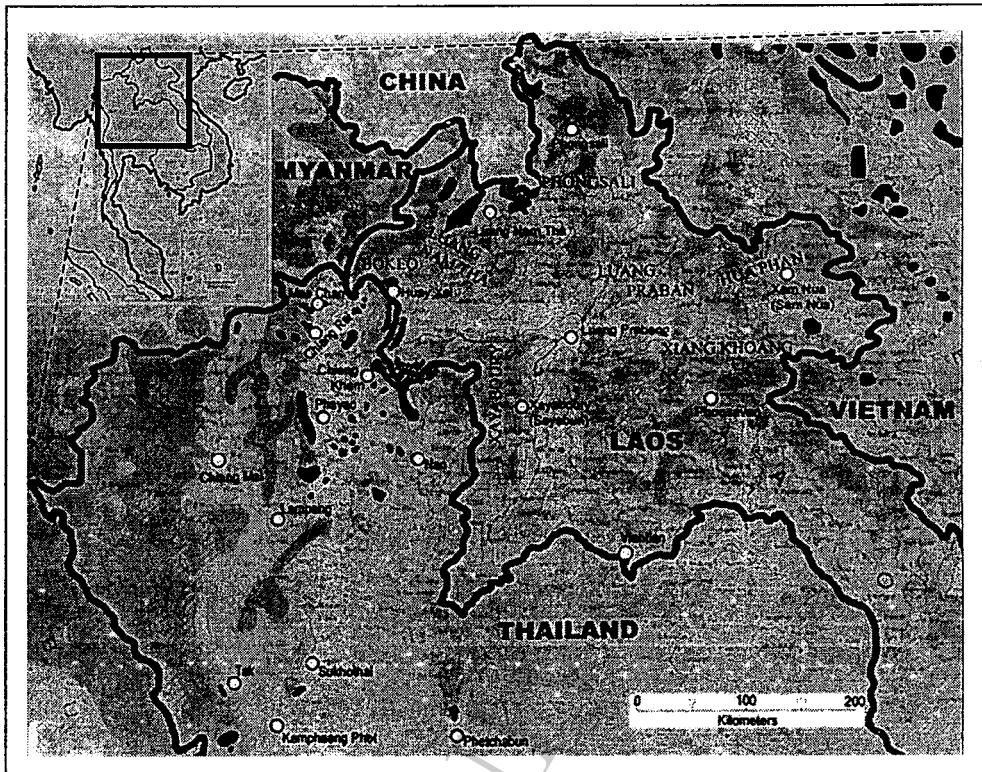Phayao, Nan, Chiang Mai, Lampang, Sukhothai, Kamphaeng Phet, and Tak provinces in 1995 (Mongkol 1995:25).

Figure 8. Iu-Mienh settlements in Thailand and Laos

More recently (2002), the Department of Social and Welfare Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of the Kingdom of Thailand has reported 45,571 in ten provinces having added two more provinces, Kanchanaburi and Phechabun (Table 1).

Province	Vil-lage	House-hold	Family	Population				
				Male	Female	Boy	Girl	Total
Chiang Rai	61	2,193	2,450	4,990	5,258	2,538	2,439	15,225
Nan	34	1,429	1,907	3,538	3,467	1,904	1,775	10,684
Phayao	29	1,326	1,530	3,218	3,120	1,354	1,273	8,965
Lampang	25	838	962	1,643	1,678	843	781	4,945
Kamphaengphet	15	529	594	1,059	1,079	423	429	2,990
Chiang Mai	5	247	250	395	392	271	295	1,353
Sukhothai	6	96	111	221	236	119	107	673
Tak	1	63	69	98	112	108	112	420
Kanchanaburi	1	20	20	78	78	31	25	212
Phechabun	1	17	19	30	32	18	24	104
Total	178	6,758	8,022	15,260	15,442	7,609	7,260	45,571

(Department of Social and Welfare Development, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security 2002)

Table 1. Distribution and Population of the Iu-Mienh in Ten
Provinces of Thailand

The trend of migration from hills to plains and cities are reported in Jonsson (1996), Kimura (1997), and Prasit et al. (2004). About 23,000 Iu-Mienh speakers currently reside in immigrant communities on the west coast of the U.S.A. and also some 2,000 in France. The total population of Iu-Mienh speakers in all mentioned countries, estimated by Pourret (2002:12), is 1,600,000.

1.8 Language Varieties

Court (1991:149) observes, "the [Iu-]Mien[h] of Thailand speak a dialect virtually identical with the [Iu-]Mien[h] of Laos, and very close to the dialect of most of the same ethnic group in China and Vietnam." As to the relationship between Thailand Iu-Mienh and Laotian Iu-Mienh, his observation may well be right since the migration route was from south China, through Vietnam and Laos, to Thailand (Chob 1997). Within Thailand the alleged difference between the Chiang Rai variety (spoken in Maechan district, Chiang Mai, Kamphaeng Phet, and Tak) and the Chiang Kham variety (Phayao, Nan, Lampang, Sukhothai) was discredited by Theeraphan (1988b, 1989) on the basis of the tone system analysis. They are essentially the same

as far as the tones are concerned. The native speakers, however, are conscious of some lexical differences as shown in Table 2.

	Chiang Rai variety		Chiang Kham variety	
pumpkin	*fuqc nyomv*	/ fu?˩ ɲom˥˩ /	*famh mbouh*	/ fam˥ bou˥ /
cabbage	*lai-dorngc*	/ lai˥ tɔŋ˩ /	*lai-jaaix dorngc*	/ lai˥ ca:i˧ tɔŋ˩ /
jackfruit	*da' norc nih*	/ ta˥ nɔ˩ ni˥ /	*ma'nun*	/ ma˥˩ nun˥ /
to play	*nyienx*	/ ɲʲen˧ /	*jiuv*	/ ciu˥˩ /
to water (plant)	*fuqv wuom*	/ fu?˥˩ ?uam˥ /	*pietv wuom*	/ pʰʲet˥˩ ?uam˥ /
cicada	*gaeng-waen*	/ kɛŋ˥ wɛn˥ /	*gaeng-waen*	/ kɛŋ˥ wɛn˥ /
			(variant) *gaeng-nzen*	/ kɛŋ˥ zen˥ /
tomato	*biouv-gomh*	/ pʲou˥ kom˥ /	*biouv-gomh*	/ pʲou˥ kom˥ /
	(variant) *loz-laangz biouv*	/ lo˥ la:˥ pʲou˥˩ /	(variant) *muangz hor biouv*	/ mwaŋ˥ hɔ˥ pʲou˥˩ /

Table 2. Sample lexical differences between regional

varieties

1.9 Orthography

The orthography used in this study is the Unified Script (a pinyin-like Roman-based script, which is sometimes called the New Roman Script)[9] ratified at the orthography conference held in Ruyuan County, Guangdong, with the Iu-Mienh delegates from China and the U. S. A., in 1984 (Purnell 1985).[10] The tones are indicated by the letters suffixed to words except for the mid-level tone, which is unmarked.

Some diacritics are also used in the Iu-Mienh orthography. The hyphen is used for an indication of tone sandhi (e.g. *Iu-Mienh*), and syllable breaks of some proper names

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[9] As opposed to the New Roman Script, there is also the Old Roman Script devised by Cox and Smalley in the 1950s, which is more phonetic than phonemic. See Purnell 1985. On the Thai-based Mienh orthography, see Callaway and Callaway 1976.

[10] This orthography is used in Mao's dictionary (1992), Panh's dictionary (1995), Aumann and Bienh's dictionary (2002), Jennings' literacy lessons (1998), and other literature. Court 1986 and Pán and Shū 1988 also use this orthography but differ slightly in that the former uses a few different vowel letters, the latter some different diacritics.

(e.g. longer than two syllables) are shown by "^" as in *A^me^li^ka* "America." Every syllable is written separately reflecting the monosyllabic tendency of this language. Within this study, however, the following interlinearization will make use of an underscore "_" to connect syllables which form one lexical item; e.g. *gamh_nziex* "fear" or *ninh_mbuo* = 3rd person-pronoun_plural-marker, "they."

A summary of Iu-Mienh phonology [11] (Purnell 1965) is given in Appendix C concerning 33 consonants, 9 vowels, 12 glides, and 6 tones, with the corresponding Roman-based orthography (viz. the Unified Script).

1.10 Methodology

1.10.1 Steps in Method

A breakdown of the method into steps is as follows:

(1) Identify verbal and clause structures of Iu-Mienh, based on seven recorded, transcribed, and interlinearized texts verified through monolingual field interviews with language helpers/consultants.

(2) Review Longacre's ten works on storyline analysis in Biblical Hebrew (1961, 1979a, 1981, 1982b, 1985a, 1987, 1989a, 1994a, 1995a, 2003a.), largely through which, among others, he constructed the theory of verb ranking or salience scheme.

(3) Define the storyline in relation to "verb ranking," "salience scheme," "foregrounding vs. backgrounding," and "tense-aspect" as a perceptual metaphor of foregroundedness that is made salient through the transitivity of events (including time movement) and sequentiality of events exhibiting a prototype effect from the prototypical dynamic verbs on-the-line to the prototypical static materials far-off-the-line, with support from DeLancey

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[11] Phonology, and its connection to historical-comparative research, is the richest area which has received attention in the linguistic study of Iu-Mienh for the past five decades (cf. Aumann and Sidwell 2001, Ballard 1985, Callaway and Callaway 1976, Chang 1953; 1966, Chen 1991, Downer 1963, Theeraphan 1988; 1989; 1997, Peiros 1998, Purnell 1965; 1970; 1985.

(1987), Dry (1992), Endo (1996), Hopper and Thompson (1980), Tomlin (1987), Wallace (1982), and others.

(4) Remove off-the-line materials first, then identify the storyline; that is, following Somsonge's insights in Thai (1991:76, 1992b:410-33) and Longacre's "peeling off" method (1996:27), an analysis will be done from margin to nucleus: namely, from cohesion, evaluation, irrealis, setting, flashback, cognitive state, background activities, then to storyline.

(5) Apply the "billiard-ball model" of Langacker (1991b:282-329) in order to analyze the transitivity of serial verb constructions and topic chains on-the-line to reveal their conceptual structures.

(6) Apply Langacker's "augmentation and grounding" model to an analysis of retrospective conjunctions and prospective conjunctions (2001b:151) in the framework of Current Discourse Space (CDS) to analyze the meaning of sequentiality in storyline.

1.10.2 Data Collection and Verification

Seven narrative texts for this study were tape-recorded and transcribed by Ms. V. Ann Burgess, who has served as a missionary nurse-midwife and as one of the senior research associates of the Mien dictionary (Purnell, Zanh G-F, Burgess, forthcoming) in Doi Luang, Maechan district, Chiang Rai province since the 1970s.

Data verification was done through monolingual interviews and discussions (cf. Everett 2001:167) with Mr. Bienh Wuonh Mengh (นายพิชญ์พิเชฐ พันธุ์พิสุทธิชน) (mid 20's), a Chiang Rai variety speaker, and Mrs. Dangc Meix Daqv (นางเหมยต๊ะ ตั้งกิตติกุล) (mid 50's) from Chiang Khong, Chiang Rai.[12] Though coming from

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[12] Though coming from Chiang Rai province, her variety is closer to that of Chiang Kham, Phayao province, probably due to a geographical proximity. Jennings (personal communication 2006) has pointed out that Meix Daqv often uses different words than Chiang Kham, while she has identified herself as a Chiang Kham variety speaker to me.

different areas, both now live in Chiang Mai, hence, providing the present researcher with the opportunity to learn from them. Mr. Zanh Gueix-Fongc also helped the author in double-checking of the data.

1.10.3 Summaries of the Narrative Texts

The names, types and number of sentences of the texts are listed in Table 3. These sentences include quotations of direct speech (DS). Though sometimes DS includes multiple sentences, these are not counted as a separate sentence but are included under the heading number. When DS is uttered without a quote marker, it is numbered as a separate sentence but not analyzed as storyline material.

	English Title	Mienh Title	Type	Story-teller	Number of Sentences
Story 1	A Story of an Old Husband and Bamboo shoots	*Nqox-Gox Caux Mbiaic Nyei Gouv*	Wisdom story	Yauz-Guangv	17
Story 2	A Story of Firefly and Grasshopper	*Gaeng-Kiev caux Caah_Laauh_Porngc Nyei Gouv*	Animal folk tale (A why story)	Yauz-Guangv	35
Story 3	A Story of Three Piglets	*Buo Dauh Dungz-Dorn*	Western nursery or children's story	Yauz-Guangv	71
Story 4	Why Cicadas don't Have Intestines	*Gaeng-Waen Maiv Maaih Jaangh Nyei Gouv*	Animal folk tale (A why story)	Yauz-Guangv	78
Story 5	A Story of Faam-Baeqv and Aengh Doih	*Faam-Baeqv Aengh Doih Nyei Gouv*	Love story	Yauz-Guangv	120
Story 6	A Story of Aahan	*Aa^han Gouv*	Hero story	Yunh Zoih	135
Story 7	A Story of Big Snake	*Domh Naang Gouv*	Mysterious tragedy	?Yauz-Guangv	259
Total Sentences					715

Table 3. Titles and types of seven stories

A summary of Story 1 (OH): "A Story of an Old Husband and Bamboo Shoots" is as follows:

There was a man who had a daughter. He wanted her to marry a very old man because of his riches. "Once you marry him, you will like him" was his persuasion.

But she didn't want to, so she got an idea to persuade her father to stop thinking about it. She collected old and hard bamboo shoots for a meal. Trying to eat it, her father complained to her that they were too hard to eat. Her reply was, "Once you bite it, you will gradually like it."

A summary of Story 2 (FG): "A Story of Firefly and Grasshopper" is as follows:

A firefly and a grasshopper took turns working for each other until it got dark. On the way back home they raced to each one's home. The grasshopper was confident of winning because he had long legs. But the firefly reached home first because he had a light and wings. On the other hand, the grasshopper asked a sparrow to let him sleep in his house. While sleeping, a dead tree snapped and fell down to frighten the grasshopper. He forgot to keep his legs bent and kicked the sparrow hard. He excused himself blaming the dead tree. The dead tree blamed termites. The termites blamed a worm. In the court case the worm was sentenced as guilty and got a punishment of strangling. This is why worms have a ring around their necks today.

Story 3 (3PG) "A Story of Three Piglets" is a Western nursery tale retold by a Iu-Mienh storyteller Yauz-Guangv, who also narrated four or five other stories. Therefore, it is completely Mienized having typical Iu-Mienh narrative features. It goes like this:

Three brother piglets built each one's house. The first one built his house with stalks of rice. The second one built his house with rods and sticks, and the third one with bricks. A wolf came, blew the first house down, and ate the first piglet. Then he blew down the second house and made it collapse, and then ate the second piglet. The third house was strong. The wolf and the third piglet competed in their cleverness several times. Finally, the piglet won and the wolf died…in what way? The story will tell you.

Story 4 (CI): "Why Cicadas don't Have Intestines?"[13] is another "Just-so story" (cf. Story 2), which can be summarized as follows:

It explains why cicadas appear hollow, owls have such big eyes, and yellow squirrels' backs are yellow. All these have reasons, starting from a barking deer that misunderstood the owl's words. This was the first link of the chain, which caused the barking deer to step on an ash pumpkin's vine. Cut off, it rolled down to bump a sesame seedpod, which went into a wild chicken's eyes. Out of agony, the wild chicken scratched black ants, which stung a snake, which in turn went into a nest of a yellow squirrel. Driven out of his nest, the yellow squirrel bit an oil fruit, and then it dropped off a tree to hit a grandfather's opium lamp, which spilled everything out. A punishment had to be given to each one. Who was most wrong?

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[13] A Lao Iu-Mienh version of this story can be found in Beard et al. (eds.) (1995:11-19), narrated by Ta Fou Saechao, under the title "The Owl's Words" *Norqc Guv Long nyei Gouv*, in the Unified Script and English translation.

Story 5 (FA): "A Story of Faam-Bae' and Aeng-Doi"[14] is, in fact, of Chinese origin, well integrated into Iu-Mienh culture. It can be summarized like this:

> Aeng-Doi was a girl who desired to study in school in the days when girls never did. She disguised herself to be a boy, and went to a school far from home. She had a classmate boy, Faam-Bae', who believed Aeng-Doi was a boy. They got along well with each other, did all things together, sharing school books, pencils, and a bedroom too. But a teacher was suspicious about Aeng-Doi, so he tested her twice to uncover her secret. Escaping from these tests, she went home alone. By the time Faam-Bae' searched and found his old friend, she had become a beautiful young woman. After considerable confusion in his heart, he decided to marry her. But he was too late because Aeng-Doi's marriage with another man had already been arranged by her parents. Yet, she knew that she was to be united with Faam-Bae' even after death. So she told him to die first and wait for her. He did. On the day of her wedding to the unwanted man, she called Faam-Bae's grave to open; she ran into the open grave, then the two ascended to the sky.

Illustrations of Story 4 (CI) and Story 5 (FA), drawn by Kao Fong Saelee in Beard (1995:13, 89)

Figure 9. Illustrations to "Cicada Story" and "Faam-Bae'
and Aeng-Doi"

Story 6 (AS): "A Story of Aahan" is a hero story full of action, adventure and humor. Unlike Story 4 (CI), Story 5 (FA), and the next one, Story 7 (BS), which are found among the Iu-Mienh in Laos as well, it is unique to the Thailand Iu-Mienh in that it shows a sociolinguistic contact with the Northern Thai people, such as the use of some Northern Thai words with "Iu-Mienh accent," and interactions with Thai officials. "Aahan" means "brave," and this is how he goes about:

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[14] An English translation of a Lao Iu-Mienh version of this story can be found in Beard et al. (eds.) (1995:75-96); unfortunately the original Iu-Mienh version was not included.

A poor Iu-Mienh couple, whose occupation was a vender going through Northern Thai villages, suddenly became famous because of their brave actions. The husband was called "Aahan the brave." First, the wife killed a bear accidentally, and then the husband killed a crocodile that attacked a passenger boat. He further saved a whole community by getting rid of a gigantic snake that had fallen into a village water source, and he killed a tiger too. Each time he solved a problem, he was rewarded with a special title by a Nothern Thai governor. Finally, when he drove back a group of enemy soldiers, he and his wife were given a fortified city.

A summary of Story 7 (BS): "A Story of Big Snake"[15] is as follows:

A man had three daughters. When he worked in a forest, he got a help from a big snake. So he gave it the third daughter as a wife. At the snake's house, she gave birth to a baby boy. When she went her father's home to pay respect after the wedding, her elder sisters deceived her by taking her out to a forest. They let her fall down from a high tree into a pond and killed her. The first daughter went back to the snake's house to be his wife. They found a strange bird in the forest and kept it at home, but he noticed that it was his first wife from the way it related with their baby. The elder sister killed it. The husband picked it up and dressed its meat to eat, but his second wife spat it out on the ground, which became mustard green. They ate it, she spat it out again, and it became a big bamboo. A grandmother found that this bamboo had magical power to keep a fire alive in a cooking place, which came from the first wife living in it. The grandmother took the wife home and kept her. The husband noticed again that this woman from the bamboo was his first wife and took her back home. The elder sister realized that her younger sister reincarnated to be a beautiful woman. She wanted her younger sister's beauty and followed her instructions. Following it, she was boiled to death.

1.10.4 "Cognitive Linguistics" as A Cover Term

In this study the term "Cognitive Linguistics" is used in a hypernymous sense embracing Langacker's CG, Fauconnier's Mental Space Theory (MST) (1994), and Talmy's Cognitive Semantics (CS) (2000a, 2000b) as its hyponyms. Primarily, CG is used for the analysis of the conceptual structure of narrative discourse in regard to the storyline. Only secondarily, some notions from MST and CS are used. CL's overlapping relationships with other disciplines in a broad perspective of cognitive

[15] A Lao Iu-Mienh version of this story can be found in Beard et al. (eds.) (1993:62-70), narrated by Muang Yoon Saechao with the title "Old Black Snake" *Naang-Jiev Gouv* in the Unified Script and English translation.

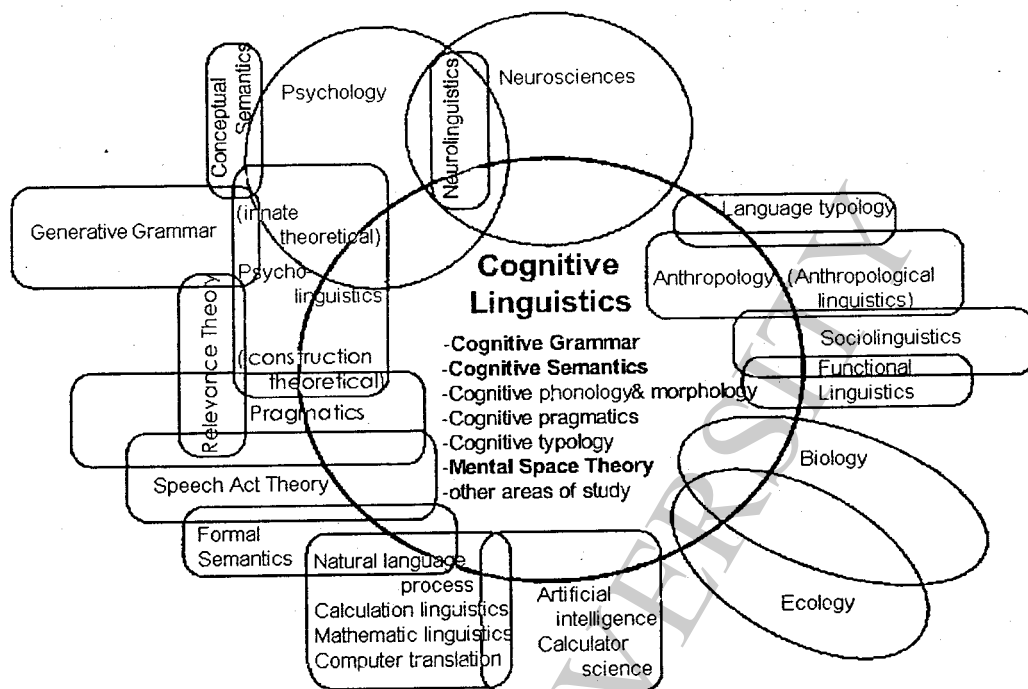science presented by Tsuji (2002:183)[16] is reproduced with an emphasis on CG, CS, and MST in Figure 10.

Figure 10. A relationship of Cognitive Linguistics with
other disciplines (Tsuji 2002:183)

1.10.5 Analysis Procedure

The data was interlenearized and glossed through monolingual interviews with the Iu-Mienh language consultants with supplements from two dictionaries, Lombard and Purnell (1968) and Panh (1995). Occasionally, the forthcoming revision of the former dictionary (Purnell, et al.) was consulted. The text corpus was divided into two kinds: one is the direct speech (DS) in the narratives, the other the narrative materials. The sentences in the latter, numbered up to 715, will be analyzed with respect to the storyline parameters such as punctiliar, sequential, dynamic, realis,

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[16] Though this diagram appears to be comprehensive, one should be also reminded of CG's significant contribution to historical-comparative linguistics, such as an account for diachronic semantic change in a process of grammaticalization studied by Geeraerts (1997) and Sweetser (1990).

narrative, substantive, following Longacre (1996). The corpus in the former kind, the materials in DS, was separated from the latter because they do not carry the storyline. Three kinds of analysis were conducted. First, a storyline was analyzed using Longacre's "peeling off" method, Langacker's grounding theory and Tayler's twelve transitivity parameters (a cognitive linguistically modified version of Hopper and Thompson 1980 by Tayler 2003). This resulted in the salience scheme of the storyline verbs and the supportive materials. The second was an analysis of the transitivity of the storyline verbs/clause using Langacker's billiard-ball model with respect to the action chain in the constructions. The third was an analysis of the sequentiality of some key constructions in relation to the storyline applying Langacker's current discourse space (CDS) model, particularly, the theory of incrementing CDS.

1.11 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The major limitations of this study are threefold. First, this study is within the category of narrative discourse. Longacre's typological classification of discourse (1968, 1972a:167-85, 1996:10) includes narrative, procedural, behavioral, and expository discourses. Of these four, narrative discourse is characteri zed by such features as [+Contingent Succession] and [+Agent-Orientation]. Besides these two features, if the narrative category has the feature [–Projection], viz. "minus projection," this is a story; that is, the events "are represented as having already taken place" (Longacre 1996:9). It is through this narrative genre among the oceans of discourse study that we will attempt to wade, narrated by Iu-Mienh storytellers in seven pieces.

Concerning the term "discourse" analysis, it was used in the early works of Longacre (i.e. till mid-80s) in the sense of a text unit larger than the sentence, and has been replaced by "textlinguistics" later (e.g. 1989a, 2003a, 2003b, Longacre and Shin Ja Hwang 1994). This change is helpful to distinguish the text analysis (cf. chapter 4)

from the kind of "discourse analysis" which has a functional or social aspect.[17] For example, Schffrin (1994) gives three different definitions of discourse, i.e. "discourse as language above the sentence," "discourse as language use" and "discourse as utterances" (viz. from a perspective of the interaction between structure and function) (1994:23-41). Typically, Longacre's textlinguistics falls into Schffrin's first definition: discourse as language above the sentence. Thus, following Longacre, the term "narrative discourse analysis" under the present study is used in a textlinguistic sense rather than the "discourse analysis" in the sociolinguistic, functional or pragmatic sense.

Second, the scope of this study is storyline, which is foregrounded in a narrative discourse. In his succinct account for what discourse analysis is to aim at, Payne (1997:343, 351-6), summarizing Givón (1983:1-41), points out the study of continuity (cohesion) includes three areas: topic continuity, action continuity and thematic continuity. In this sense, the present study concentrates on the action continuity as it seeks to investigate foregroundedness through sequentiality and transitivity in storyline.

Therefore, admitting that there is rich information in the "off-the-line" materials[18] as well as topic continuity and thematic continuity, this study is limited to the primary task of investigating the sequentiality and transitivity in the sense of action continuity in a narrative discourse analysis. By way of explanation, the term sequentiality is a narrowly defined word; it is a hyponym of continuity. Thus, the examination of

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[17] The distinction between "text" and "discourse" is necessary from a social/functional perspective. From this perspective, describing a text of a narrative belongs to textlinguistics; while describing how the genre narrative is used in a social context with all additional components (e.g. symbolic or cultural meaning) is discourse analysis, a text in use. On the other hand, a borderline between the two approaches may be blurred: e.g. Longacre's approach (2003a) incorporates sociolinguistic analysis, speech acts and dialogue analysis into textlinguistics. In addition, other scholars approache both aspects simultaneously, for example, as in works by Halliday and Hasan (1989) form Systemic Functional Linguistics, viewing language as a social-semiotic phenomena; Brown (1995) from cognitive/pragmatic approach; or Smith (2003) from the discourse modes perspective.

[18] Payne (1997:353) writes, "'Foreground' information is not the same as the 'most important' information in a text. It may be more accurate to say that the foregrounded material is the framework on which the important information is hung. [...] The real significance of a narrative, as well as any other kind of text, often is carried in the 'background' clauses."

discourse cohesion is demarcated to the minimum extent as needed for the sequentiality in storyline only.

Third, this research will be confined to a semantic investigation of storyline in terms of the conceptual structure in Langacker's sense. This means that we do not enter an area of hermeneutics of texts, such as a sense of Johnstone's heuristic approach to discourse analysis (2002:230-1). She claims to "consider meaning from all of these perspectives," (i.e. what the speaker means, what the text itself means, and its meaning to its audiences); rather, we limit ourselves to a linguistic study of the meaning of narrative texts. Halliday and Hasan (1976:327) contend "[t]he linguistic analysis of a text is not an interpretation of that text; it is an explanation;" thus, we will try to explore how the linguistic constructions are interconnected to encode meaning in the storyline reflected in the conceptual structures.